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First Law

671 The first law on elementary education was
872 passed in 1922 making the Lithuanian primary
875 school of four grades and requiring all children of both sexes between the ages of 7 and 13 to attend it. The general administrative organization was based on the principle of decentralization which granted wide powers to the local authorities and to the children's parents. However, this experience soon showed that under such a system the qualifications of the
[647] teachers left much to be desired. For this reason the law of 1922 was amended in 1925 and the appointment of teachers, their transfer from one school to another, and certain other matters were centered in the Ministry of Education. In the same year the school curricula were drawn up and officially approved. The schools were run under this law up to 1936 when a new elementary school law
[186] was promulgated which declares that the purpose of the elementary school is to provide primary education for the youth of Lithuania, foster their spiritual and physical growth, and teach them to love, cherish, and sacrifice themselves for Lithuania.

872 The present elementary school has six grades. The first four, obligatory for children between 7 and 13, form the first degree of study. The last two, for children 14 and 15 years old, form the second degree which is optional as yet because not enough schools are available. The increase in them began only in 1933. The elementary school subjects of instruction are: Religion taught by clergymen of the various denominations and compulsory for all children, Lithuanian as the language of instruction, arithmetic, knowledge of environment, history, geography,
872 natural history, art, manual arts, music and
186 singing, and physical training. In an ele-
191 mentary school district where the number of children of non-Lithuanian parentage exceeds

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872 186 191 30, a school with a language of instruction other than Lithuanian may be established. In it Lithuanian is taught as a distinct subject from the second grade onwards, and from the third grade on instruction in environment, history, and geography is given in Lithuanian. In a school with Lithuanian as the medium, children of non-Lithuanian parentage, if their number is not less than 20, are taught their mother tongue as a separate subject.

Certificates Granted

872 874 At the end of the first and second degrees of study, the pupils are examined and granted the elementary school graduation certificate which, if from the second degree, grants the right to enter, without further examination, the first grade of a secondary school (gymnasium) or a school offering special training for a vocation. Persons who have attended no schools may earn these certificates by passing official examinations embracing the entire course of study.

● 875 Elementary school teachers are classified as junior, first-degree, second-degree, senior first-degree, and senior second-degree. They are trained in normal schools and pedagogical institutes. Admission to normal schools is accorded those who have completed four grades of a secondary school, and the course extends for 4 years. To the pedagogical institutes only graduates of normal schools or gymnasia are admitted and the duration of studies is 2 years. Each teacher has in charge from 30 to 60 pupils, the average being 55. The average number with which the teacher works in winter is 43, and in summer 30,

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875 [872] since not all children in Lithuania attend school all the year. First-grade and second-grade pupils in the rural districts go to school only 4 months; September 1 to November 1, and May 1 to July 1. In winter the country schools are attended only by third-, fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade pupils. In urban areas pupils attend throughout the school year.

871 The maintenance of elementary schools devolves on the local authorities. The costs of one school and one grade are around 11,890.-23 and 5,519.6 litas respectively. One lita is 16.93 cents in coinage of the United States. According to the figures of 1937, the cost of keeping one child in an elementary school is 99.4 litas annually. Towards the upkeep of elementary schools an average of 11.48 litas was paid by every inhabitant in 1937.

School Buildings

346 871 The school buildings are for the most part erected by the localities, grants-in-aid being made by the Ministry of Education which assigns in its budget over a million litas yearly for this purpose. At present about 80 new school buildings are constructed each year at an expenditure of two million litas. With the additional sums assigned for the acquisition of equipment and educational appliances, about three millions are spent annually.

871 On January 31, 1938, there was a total of 2,599 schools, 5,613 teachers, and 301,188 pupils or approximately 12 percent of the entire population enrolled in elementary schools.

871 873 The secondary school system was reorganized in 1936 by a special law. The 8-year gymnasia, modeled after the former Russian

000 "Anti-religious propaganda is not forbidden in Soviet Lithuania, nor is religious propaganda forbidden. Like all Catholic priests, I preach the word of God freely and without hindrance from the pulpit. If anti-religious lectures are given in our city, any citizen does or does not attend as he sees fit—just as every citizen does or does not attend the services at any church according to the dictates of his judgment."

This assertion, of course, violates the wording of Art. 124 of the Soviet Constitution. Constitution, published by the OGIZ State Publishing House of Political Literature at Moscow in 1938, in English, gives the following (inaccurate) translation: "Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens."

● 875 A direct contradiction is provided by an article of comrade V. Niunka, Minister of Education of the Lithuanian SSR, in the Communist Party organ *Tiesa* of 31 October 1948:

"Most of the teachers of the Ignalina gymnasium . . . did not rid themselves of religious prejudices, they frequently go to church thereby setting a bad example for the pupils. . . . Former director N. Petravičius is a clerical, he practices his religion, he even keeps pictures of the saints in his home . . . and categorically refuses to admit his errors. . . .

"Therefore, the College of the Ministry of Education decrees:

"1) to dismiss the following teachers from teaching duties:

"(a) Nikanoras Petravičius as a clerical and unfit to work in Soviet schools . . ." — and other teachers practicing their religious duties.

000 There was indeed a Casimir Kulak, a Catholic priest of Whiteruthenian extraction. He had been a professor of the Eastern rite liturgy and Orthodox Theology at the Roman Catholic Seminary in Pinsk. He was an erudite man, tolerant in his dealings with the Lithuanians, and a Whiteruthenian patriot—not to be confused with the Lithuanians.

It is feared that the alleged "interview" in the Soviet Embassy Bulletin may be the last we shall hear of this priest—unless from a MVD dungeon. The Soviet Embassy had once before published an "interview" with a Catholic dignitary, the Most Rev. Mečys Reinys, Archbishop of Vilnius,—and he "vanished" within a month thereafter. . . .

Resistance

668 Comrade Antanas Sniečkus, the window-dressing
186 "Stalin" of Lithuania—First Secretary of the Communist Party/bolshevik of Lithuania—had this to say in the LKP/b organ *Tiesa* ("Pravda"), No. 300 of 24 December 1947:

"It must not be forgotten that the bourgeois nationalists within the republic's territory are conducting anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation, spreading provocative rumors and, seeking to undermine the work, they attempt to infiltrate in the state apparatus.

"When German fascism lies smashed and is no longer able to aid the Lithuanian bourgeois nationalists, they expect such aid from the Anglo-American imperialists.

". . . They praise the false Anglo-Saxon democracy and idealize the bourgeois system of America and England.

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562 893 the others are mixed but in the larger schools in which parallel classes exist, separate classes for boys and girls are established.

875 [658] The extension of the network of secondary schools produced in the first years of Lithuania's independence a shortage of teachers, and educating a staff was undertaken by the State. Teachers were trained in foreign universities, and from 1922 onwards in the University of Vytautas the Great in Kaunas, as well. Most of the 1,432 teachers now employed are university graduates and possess the qualifications required by the Ministry of Education. They are classified as junior teachers, teachers, and senior teachers. The rank of junior teacher is granted to persons who have taken a university course in psychology, pedagogics, the history of pedagogics, pedology, and the methodology of their specialties, or have passed examinations in these subjects and have completed their studies in the subjects necessary for the teaching of their specialty. Junior teachers who have taught successfully not less than 2 years and have conducted two probational lessons in their specialty may be elevated by the Ministry of Education to the rank of teachers. Teachers who have taught with outstanding success for at least 5 years may be raised to senior teachers.

School Competitions

873 555 A State physical culture badge to encourage physical fitness, scout troops and circles, camps for students, and travel during the vacation period are all connected with secondary education, but perhaps the most noteworthy activity to promote all-sided scholastic progress and interscholastic cooperation is the school competitions that were organized first in 1935 and take place at the end of the school year.

In these competitions the secondary schools strive for supremacy in the reading and recitation of Lithuanian, French, and German, drawing, singing, and physical culture. In

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VII. EDUCATION — GENERAL, AGRICULTURAL AND HOUSECRAFT

872 Compulsory elementary education was gradually introduced between 1928 and 1931.

At present, elementary schools are divided into two grades. The first grade, which consists of four standards, is compulsory for children from 7 to 13 years of age. The second grade, consisting of two standards, is intended for children between the ages of 14 and 15 who have passed through the first grade; attendance is not as yet compulsory.

(In the Klaipėda territory attendance for six years at an elementary school is obligatory.)

To meet the needs of peasants on isolated farms, schools consist, as a rule, of only one or two class-rooms; those in the chief towns have from four to six rooms. The network of schools is organised in such a way that no child ever has to go more than 4 kilometres to get to school.

[875] The teachers are trained at the training colleges and at the Pedagogic Institute. Qualified students of the training colleges may proceed to higher educational establishments (the university). The Pedagogic Institute has a two-years course for students who have completed the grammar school or training college curriculum. The teachers are officials, paid by the State. The municipalities provide them lodging, heating and lighting or a cash equivalent.

The progress in elementary education since before the war is illustrated by the increase in the number of schools and of pupils. In 1913, there were 875 elementary schools in Lithuania, with 51,221 pupils; in 1919, there were 1,036 schools, with 45,540 pupils, and in 1938, 2,319 schools, with 283,773 pupils and 5,110 teachers. During the early years of Lithuanian independence, when the Government set about organising education on lines in keeping with the national aspirations, there was a shortage of qualified teachers and of school-buildings. In 1913, out of the 875 elementary schools in existence in the territory which now constitutes Lithuania, only 360 had their own premises, and some of these buildings were destroyed during the war.

874 Adult education is provided by the people's universities and by evening classes held at the elementary schools.

212 There is a steady decline in the number of illiterate persons in rural districts, and there are practically no illiterate young people.